January 5, 2020

[This episode begins starts at what looks like an abandoned police office, with a projector screen in the back. We see the the projector turn on, and go down from four, three, two, and one, to a black-and-white cartoon of Whiskers in 1920’s style]

Whiskers: Hello kiddies! It seems that we’ve got a lot of new friends today!

[The camera cuts to show the empty office with the project light aiming at the screen.]

Whiskers: You’re probably wondering where I came from.

[Cut back to the screen.]

Whiskers: Well, it’s a long story, so get comfy cozy, and I’m going to take you on a journey.

[Whiskers steps to the side, and we zoom in. As we zoom in, a 1920’s version of GA Chicago comes into view, and it changes from black and white to exploding with vibrant colors.]

[We get a blaring of jazz music as we get establishing shots of the era. The buildings are in an art deco style, with pastel colors against black, instead of gold. The cars are very diesel punk. Some of them look like they’re repurposed planes. Most of them are a random mismatch of machines. The girls wear more realistic flapper dresses (not costume sides), filled with beads and embroidery. They wear all kinds of decorations in their (very long) hair, from over-the-top bows to large floppy hats to feathers. Some girls even wear a full feather headdress. The boys wear what looks like a typical suit, covered in polka dots. They’ve got a proto-tie - a bowtie left undone around their necks, and they keep their hair very short. Cut to inside a car,

where we see a family driving along, a girl driving the car. The girl is Betty, the mother is Mary.]

Mary Can you turn this stuff off?

Betty: Come on, Mary, this jazz music is the bees knees.

Mary: I doubt it’s going to catch on. It sounds like random noise.

[The car drives by an alleyway, and into it, we see a boy looking on. He seems nervous. This is Rhino.]

Rhino: Hey boss, I think that was yer sister who just drove by.

[Rhino turns around and we see the main character of this episode - Murphy. He looks incredibly stern, and carries a soda tab gun. His hair is incredibly short, almost shaved. And he’s surrounded by some other kids who appear much like gangsters - T-Bone, Squishy, and Bugsy. They’re surrounding a frightened looking boy named Cliff.]

Murphy: Stay focused, Rhino. We got important business to take care of.

[Murphy raises up his soda tab. T-Bone and Squishy look aggressively at Cliff.]

Murphy: The boys and I seem to be missing a few marbles.

Cliff: R-really, you don’t say?

Murphy: You some kinda funny kid?

Cliff: No, of course not, Murphy.

Murphy: Then maybe I’m the funny kid. Do I look like some kinda clown to you?

[The camera showcases Murphy’s polka-dotted outfit. However, it’s still framed in a way to make him seem intimidating.]

Cliff: No, Murphy. Yer serious.

Murphy: You got that right, so where are my marbles?

[Rhino runs up]

Rhino: Boss, we got a wind-up on the way here.

[Murphy’s eyes narrow. Cliff gives out a smile on the corner of his mouth.]

Murphy: So, you do think I’m a funny bunny eh. Let’s see how you like some time in the can.

Cliff: N-no, anything but that Murphy.

[T-Bone and Squishy hold up Cliff against the alley wall, and Murphy shoots him with the soda tab. In a second, he’s covered in an explosion of root beer. In the next shot, Murphy and his goons are gone, but the “wind up” - a girl scout, Ruth, turns the corner, and she doesn’t look pleased.]

Ruth: Well, well, well. What do I see here?

[Cliff gets to his senses and looks at the situation.]

Cliff: N-no, you don’t understand.

Ruth: What I understand is that you’re covered in soda.

[She takes a sniff]

Ruth: Root beer if I’m not mistaken. And if I’m not mistaken, that stuff is against the law. Look at the mess you’ve made. I don’t even want to touch you.

Cliff: I’m tellin’ you, it was Murphy!

[Ruth thinks for a moment and laughs.]

Ruth: Mr. Murphy? Now I’ve heard everything. Next thing you know, you’re gonna be saying a bunny rabbit’s been covering you in root beer. C’mon, off to time out with you.

[Ruth takes out some handcuffs and carries him off, leaving him grimacing.]

[Cut to Murphy and his gang in a car.]

T-Bone: Did we really have ta do that? I wanted those marbles.

Murphy: Cliff was gettin’ too close to our business. If he knew what we was doing, you could kiss each and every marble you got goodbye.

T-Bone: I guess.

[Bugsy pops a cricket in his mouth.]

Bugsy: There’s gotta be a million marbles in Mud Flatt, we’re gonna have ‘em sooner or later.

T-Bone: I kinda wanna ‘em now. This guy’s got his eye on a brand new baseball bat.

Murphy: You sound like my sister, always now, now, now.

Squishy: What do you expect? Dolls be dolls.

Murphy: Dolls be dolls, yeah. That’s why you’ve been lettin’ yer hair grow out.

Squishy: Well, I’m just gettin’ ready for Girls & Boys Day. I always get excited for the holiday.

[Murphy stares at the guy for a good long time.]

Murphy: Well you look like a punz.

[Squishy frowns at hearing this. The car stops.]

Murphy: We’re here.

[Cut to them walking in the main downtown city of Mud Flatt, the GA version of Chicago. The skyscrapers look like they were made like block towers, each floor being haphazardly stacked on top of each other. Murphy and his boys enter a skyscraper entitled the “Forable” and we’re giving a full dose of the colors and styles within.]

[Murphy signals to his boys to wait, while he goes on himself. The two of them go off to the side.]

Squishy: Do I really look like a punz?

T-Bone: Eh, if I knew. My brother’s a complete doughnut, so I couldn’t tell.

[Murphy walks up to the boy receptionist.]

Murphy: It’s Murphy.

Receptionist: Ah, Mr. Murphy. Dorothy is willing to see you now.

[Murphy walks into the elevator. He’s clearly the only boy in there, and it’s clear that there is an air of uncomfortableness. From the outside of the building, through the windows, we can see that the elevator is built like a ferris wheel. Instead of going straight up, it goes around. Murphy eventually comes out on the top floor.]

[There’s a lingering shot as Murphy walks through the hallway to a large office door. The hallway is filled with paintings - many of which are dogs in hats.. Murphy barely pays it any mind. As he walks, he ties his bowtie. Beady chains hang down from the ceiling. When he gets to the door, he knocks on the knockers and then opens it up.]

[In the office we see Dorothy Forable, wearing very Egyptian-styled clothing. She speaks on a phone, while sucking on a lollipop.]

Dorothy: If I haven't sold a million cars by the end of the year, then Mildren is going to throw the biggest temper tantrum you've ever seen. And trust me, neither of us want to be on the end of that.

[Murphy stands there, hands behind his back as he looks on, waiting for Dorothy to hang up the phone. We get a focus on her hand as she does so.]

Dorothy: Ah, Mr. Murphy, I'm so glad to see you.

Murphy: The pleasure is all mine, Ms. Dorothy.

Dorothy: Henry should be here shortly. I've heard interesting stories from him.

[Murphy's eyes narrow]

Murphy: Have you now?

Dorothy: He kept talking about how you were going to take him to one of those… baseball games, was it? I don't see any kind of point in that.

Murphy: The boy's been good, I thought that he'd deserve a little fun. Trust me, priority one is teaching the boy a way that a boy oughtta behave.

Dorothy: So I've heard. Many of my friends have said that you're a wonderful big brother.

Murphy: I take pride in my work, Ms.

Dorothy: So, I dunno how much I believe in that “way a boy oughtta behave” coal. It’s nice to have boys out and about now. They get to do the work like this.

[Murphy doesn’t say anything. We cut to the elevator, with Murphy and a three-year-old boy, Henry, standing next to him. Murphy tries to untie his bowtie. It’s just the two of them in silence as the elevator goes to the bottom. After a bit of a beat, Henry looks up towards Murphy. Murphy returns his gaze.]

Murphy: Yer sis sure is something, ain’t she?

Henry: You don’t like her very much, do you?

Murphy: One doll’s as good as any other, I suppose.

[They stand in silence for a beat.]

Henry: Are we gonna go to that baseball game?

Murphy: Henry, have I ever told you what happens in tattle-tales in my business?

Henry: Uh… no, you haven’t Mr. Murphy.

[We cut to the elevator doors opening up. Murphy looks fine, but Henry looks incredibly frightened, and was clearly crying. The receptionist looks over.]

Receptionist: Is Henry okay?

Murphy: Henry had a bit of an accident. We’re going to get it taken care of.

[Murphy pulls Henry along, and Henry follows with him.]

Receptionist: Sorry about that Henry. I shouldn’t ask. Please don’t let the boss know about it.

Henry: D-don’t worry, I ain’t gonna tell no one nothing.

[The two of them pass by Murphy’s boys.]

Rhino: Hey, I ain’t riding in a car with some kid who’s had an accident.

[Murphy stares at Rhino for a beat.]

Murphy: Then you can walk. Car only seats five anyway.

Rhino: B-boss, you’re kiddin’ right.

Murphy: Don’t you have something to be doing, right now?

Rhino: O-oh yeah.

[Murphy, Henry, T-Bone, Squishy, and Bugsy walk outside the building.]

Henry: Who was that?

Murphy: That was Rhino.

Henry: He doesn’t seem much like a rhino at all.

T-Bone: That ain’t why we call ‘im Rhino.

Henry: Then why do you call him Rhino?

T-Bone: Cuz the kid is constantly looking over his back like a rhino is gonna trample him. Sometimes we wish it did.

[They exit the building.]

T-Bone: I’m T-Bone, that’s Squishy, and that’s Bugsy.

Henry: T-Bone?

Murphy: Let’s just say we don’t let him drive the car.

Bugsy: You wanna know why they call me Bugsy?

Henry: Uh… sure.

Bugsy: Cuz I eats bugs.

[He pulls out a cricket and pops it in his mouth.]

Henry: Oh that’s disgusting.

Bugsy: Nice kid you got there, boss. Sounds like a doughnut to me.

Henry: Doughnut? I like doughnuts.

Bugsy: What’s with this kid?

Murphy: He’s kinda new. You don’t wanna be a doughnut, kid.

[Murphy enters the car.]

Henry: Why not?

[Henry tries to enter the shotgun cab, but Squishy boots him to the back.]

Squishy: Nah, back of the car, for doughnuts, doughnut.

[Cut to Henry in the back seat, surrounded by T-Bone and Bugsy.]

Bugsy: Doughnut, kid, you know. The kinda boy who thinks his place is at home, making his sister cakes and pies.

Henry: Well… what else am I supposed to do?

[T-Bone bursts out laughing.]

T-Bone: What am I supposed to do he he says. This guy’s got a lotta learning to do.

Murphy: How’s about we show you what the high life is really like. The stuff yer sister doesn’t want you to know about.

[Henry looks conflicted.]

[Cut to them walking into a pizzeria. A waiter sits them down.]

Waiter: Hello, Mr. Murphy. Is there anything we can get you?

Murphy: Get us a sampler, and a round of egg creams.

Henry: Egg cream?

T-Bone: This kid’s just a box a questions, ain’t he? Listen kid, if you wanna go far with us, you might have to keep the ninth degree to zero.

Waiter: Is there anything else I can get you?

T-Bone: Hey, yeah, get us a couple of doughnuts, why don’t you?

Waiter: Uh, sorry, we don’t serve doughnuts here.

T-Bone: I dunno about that, you’re serving one right now.

Henry: stop calling me a doughnut already.

Murphy: I'll be right back, I can't listen to this stuff.

[Murphy gets up and walks towards the back of the restaurant.]

T-Bone: What, it was funny!

Squishy: Hey, leave the funny business to Rhino. He makes me laugh.

[Cut to the office of Dorris, in the back of the restaurant. A large shadow casts upon the room as Murphy enters it. Dorris notices him and immediately feels concerned.]

Dorris: M-Murphy. I didn't expect you to be here for another week or two.

Murphy: If you ain't early in this business, you're out of this business. Besides, I heard through the grapevine, you're a little low on bubbles

[Dorris looks a little bit frightened.]

Dorris: N-no, Murphy. I'm not. Root beer has been illegal for years, and I can't keep serving it. The scouts raided this place just the other day. I'm lucky I was out then.

Murphy: It's a shame that our little business venture has come to an end. I was looking forward to our relationship, Dorris.

Dorris: Murphy, if you or your riders show up here again, I'm gonna let everyone know what you've been doing.

Murphy: That’s your mistake to make.

[Murphy walks back into the dining area.]

Henry: Wow, Murphy. These egg creams are amazing! How come I never heard of these before?

Murphy: Glad you’re enjoying that kid, but we gotta take this stuff to go.

Bugsy: Take this stuff to go? We’re eatin’ here.

Murphy: Yeah, not anymore.

[Murphy looks towards Squishy.]

Murphy: It’s better if we blow this place.

[Squishy takes a second to process this.]

[Cut to everyone else in the car.]

Henry: What’s taking Squishy so long? We’ve been waiting in the car forever.

T-Bone: Maybe we should tell you why his name is Squishy.

Henry: I… don’t think I wanna know.

[Squishy comes to the car.]

Squishy: Alright, I’m set.

[They go driving off. We cut to the restaurant. It explodes like a school science fair volcano, pouring out baking soda and fizz, breaking the windows, and flooding the place with it.]

[Cut back to the car.]

Henry: So… why didn’t I know about those things?

T-Bone: Cuz you’re a doughnut.

Henry: Stop calling me that!

Murphy: Well, are you, or ain’tcha?

Henry: No, I’m not.

Murphy: Then you’re gonna have to prove it.

Henry: How can I do that?

Bugsy: Well, you can start by undoing that bowtie, you look ridiculous.

Murphy: Your sister, I hear she makes some fine cars.

[Cut to late at night. There’s a full moon high above an extravagant mansion. Murphy stops his car.]

Murphy: This is the place.

[As they talk, we get hovering shots of the mansion and the pieces of interest.]

Henry: It’s my house.

Murphy: And you know that car in the driveway?

Henry: Yeah… it’s my sister’s favorite. She had it specially made with advanced parts from all over the world.

Murphy: That car’s just as much yours as it is hers. Your last name’s Forable, ain’t it?

Henry: But she—

Murphy: She hired me to make you someone like her receptionist, a boy who would take orders from girls without any question. Are you one of those boys?

Henry: I can’t… steal a car.

[Cut to Henry standing outside of the car, with Murphy in the driver’s seat of his car.]

Murphy: Henry, right now, you gotta make the choice of what kinda kid you wanna be. You wanna be under the thumb of yer sis for your whole life, or do you want the kinda lifestyle she has?

[There’s a beat, as Henry stands there for a minute.]

Murphy: You got five minutes. I don’t see you in those five minutes, I ain’t ever gonna see you again.

[Henry nods, and then he starts walking. He climbs over his fence.]

Squishy: The kid ain’t gonna do it, he’s—

Murphy: He’s gonna do it. There’s a reason that Dorothy wanted me to babysit tonight. She had a little slumber party planned.

[Henry walks through the yard, nervously. And then he hears a loud crash. He turns his eye towards the upstairs, and sees excitement through the windows. Henry looks into the window and sees that a bunch of girls are having a slumber party, a very wild one. We get shots of this, but it’s kept silent, even though it’s clearly loud.]

[Cut to Henry opening the front door, and we’re immediately blasted with noise and music. Girls going crazy. Henry sneaks up to a banister and looks over it, and then he sees that his sister and several other girls are toasting egg creams.]

Henry: She… she…

[Henry looks on determined, and then he turns towards the kitchen. He up turns drawers and such until he finds a pair of keys. We look at the party for a few more seconds. One girl is even being wrapped as a toilet paper mummy.]

Dorothy: I’m glad that everyone could come to this fabulous—

[As Dorothy is talking, we hear a car driving off, and metal bending. Dorothy’s eyes widen with fear. Cut to a rising shot of the mansion. The car is missing. Henry drove it right through the gate. Then we see Murphy following along after Henry. Henry is driving haphazardly - the first time that he’s ever done it.]

[Cut to them at an old warehouse. The guys are all outside it.]

T-Bone: Hey, Dorothy’s gonna lose all her marbles tryin’ to get this one back.

Murphy: We ain’t ransoming this one, T-Bone.

T-Bone: W-why not?

Murphy: Cuz it’s not our car.

[Cut to Henry sitting down on the floor, looking very shocked at what he just did.]

Henry: I… just took my sister’s favorite car. She doesn’t even let me look at it.

T-Bone: If I’m gonna have to hear this all night, I’m gonna be very upset.

[Bugsy walks up to Henry.]

Bugsy: Looks like someone ain’t a doughnut no more.

[Henry just looks at Bugsy, distraught. Bugsy sits down next to him.]

Bugsy: I ‘member the time I learned my sister was just like any other doll out there. I ate nothin’ but bugs to mess with her for two whole weeks. I didn’t even like bugs!

[Bugsy says as he grabs a worm from the ground.]

Henry: I don’t wanna believe it. There’s… gotta be a way for a boy to make somethin’ of himself without doing… this.

[Henry looks over towards Murphy.]

Bugsy: Maybe there is, but I don’t believe it. You’re lookin’ at the most successful boy in all of Mud Flatt.

Henry: What am I gonna tell Dorothy?

Murphy: Nothing. You’re her perfect little brother, remember?

Henry: R-right. So, I’m not a doughnut no more?

Murphy: Nah, but you’re a bit of a punz.

Henry: Punz?

[Squishy walks up.]

Squishy: Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair.

[Henry covers his head.]

Murphy: Don’t worry, we got people who can cut it.

Henry: My sister says boys who keep their hair short look weird.

Murphy: And it don’t look weird to you that they always got feathers stickin’ outta their hair? C’mon, I wanna show you something.

[Cut to the day. They walk up to a steampunk-style zeppelin that’s on the ground.]

Henry: What’s this?

Murphy: You wanted to see a baseball game, right?

Henry: From what I heard on the talkie, that’s way too small to play baseball… unless they were gonna do it on the roof. Even then, I don’t think we could watch.

Squishy: Nah, dummy. The thing’s gonna fly over the stadium, and that’s when we get the best seat in the house.

[Cut to them walking inside the zeppelin. Many other kids, a mix of boys and girls are walking inside. Henry looks afraid of them.]

Henry: There’s… dolls coming on board. Ain’t they gonna ruin our fun?

Bugsy: Don’t tell Murphy I said this, but there’s a difference between girls and dolls. Trust us, the girls coming on no what’s up. They had to get tickets from Murphy himself.

[Murphy walks up.]

Murphy: Whatever you think, Bugsy. I hope you ain’t goin’ soft on me.

Bugsy: Course not, boss.

Murphy: The zeppelin’s gonna be filled with every mover and shaker in Mud Flatt. It’s worth most of ‘em to spend an afternoon with boys.

Henry: Even my sister?

Murphy: I said most of ‘em.

[Cut to shots of the blimp taking off. Inside the main room, it looks a lot like a fancy restaurant and a bar. Murphy and Henry take over for a private room in front of the blimp. Henry has his face pressed against the window.]

Murphy: You keep doin’ that, you’re gonna fall out.

[Henry moves back a little bit in fright.]

Henry: Hey, why ain’t you excited about this game?

Murphy: Let’s just say that I can guess who’s gonna win.

[Henry looks around and notices the restaurant decor.]

Henry: Hey… does this place serve egg creams?

Murphy: This place serves something a little bit better.

[With a clank two bottles of root beer and put down on the table.]

Henry: Is… that what I think it is?

Murphy: Root beer.

Henry: I didn’t think… that I’d ever get to see this stuff.

Murphy: Well, it ain’t for lookin’, now is it?

[Henry starts drinking it, vigorously. Murphy drinks from it slowly. He looks at his reflection in the glass. We see an over-the-top baseball game down below.]

Murphy: If the dolls had their way, you’d never get to see this stuff.

Henry: I thought it was banned cuz it made too much of a mess.

[We get shots of the main cabin in the back.]

Murphy: And when have kids ever been worried about too much mess?

Henry: You really think the girls had it banned cuz boys like this stuff?

[As Murphy says this next line, we do look at some higher class girls.]

Murphy: All I knows is that boys drink more root beer than girls, and the girls been writing the laws.

[Cut to later that night. Murphy pulls up to his home. He looks at see that the lights are out.]

Murphy: Looks like sis is workin’ late tonight. Better her than me.

[Murphy enters his house, and the lights turn on, and his family - his mother, Mary; his father Daniel; and his sister Betty pops out of the woodwork. The whole place is revealed to be a surprise party.]

Family: Surprise!

[Murphy makes a motion like he’s about to hurt someone in panic, but he stops just short before he hits Betty.]

Murphy: I told yous, I ain’t big on surprises.

Betty: C’mon, Murph, you deserve a nice surprise party. You’ve been doin’ good work all year.

Murphy: Kinda forgot today was my birthday.

Betty: How could you forget?

Betty & Murphy: Two weeks before Girls & Boys Day, to the day.

Betty: Which reminds me, I'll be getting your present.

[Cut to Murphy looking out the window, ignoring his parents, as Betty comes in with a big present.]

Betty: Open it! Open it!

[Murphy rolls his eyes, as if waiting to get this over with. He pulls out a dress.]

Murphy: Heh.

Betty: I heard you weren't able to find nothing for Girls & Boys Day, so I thought I'd help you out a little bit.

[Murphy looks towards it.]

Betty: Well, what are you waitin' for? Try it on, try it on!

[Cut to Murphy trying it on.]

Murphy: Betty, you didn't have to do this.

Betty: I want you to have a good time at the holiday. That one’s one of my favorites.

[Murphy’s mouth gets crooked.]

Murphy: Thanks sis, I love it.

[Betty clasps her hand happily.]

Betty: I’m going to be a cheerleader this Girls & Boys Day. Won’t that be spiffy?

[Cut to Murphy back in his normal clothes on the zeppelin. Bugsy and Henry are sitting in the distance.]

Henry: I didn’t know that it was Murphy’s birthday.

Bugsy: Yeah well, if he had his way no one else would either.

Henry: Why not? It scared of growing up or somethin’?

Bugsy: You think kids who have their birthday close to Miracle Day gotta problem. You wanna end up in the lake, you just gotta ask the boss what kinda dress he got for his birthday this year.

Henry: You goin’ down to the holiday?

[Murphy walks by.]

Murphy: I don’t know why anyone would. It’s just an excuse to have those dolls see us all prettied up for a day.

[Murphy leaves the room.]

Henry: I wish we could do somethin’ to cheer up the boss.

[Cut to Henry leaving the room, where he walks past Rhino. Rhino’s got a bit of a smile.]

Rhino: So, you wanna make the boss happy, huh?

Henry: Yeah, I just wish I knew how.

Rhino: I got an idea. But I’m gonna need some help. Someone with a little talent for stealth, like yerself.

Henry: I think I can do that. Lemme just go tell the boss we got somethin’ planned.

Rhino: Nah, you can’t tell the boss nothing. Think of it as… a surprise.

[We cut to an old timey radio playing.]

News announcer: It’s Gross & Bubbly on this Girls & Boys Day. Celebrations were cut short due to a series of pranks on high powered officials.

[Zoom into the radio to show old time photographs of the events. Several kid gangsters have done drive bys with their root beer soda tabs on high powered girls.]

News announcer: Mayor Margaret was the first one doused in illegal root beer by a car driving by. Five girls founds themselves eye deep in mess, everyone from Ruth, the scout chief, to Dorothy Forable. Betty Consavlo was the last victim at this time. An anonymous tip has suggested that she was targeted because she was the sister of the mysterious root beer rider, who had been supplying the stuff illegally to the city.

[We zoom out of the radio into the trial waiting room, with Murphy sitting there.He looks incredibly intimidating, despite being cuffed up. The other gangster boys are there, including Henry.]

News Announcer {voice over}: In other news, the December Birthday protests continue with kids demanding it be illegal to give them one present as both their birthday and Miracle Day gift.

[Bugsy turns off the radio.]

Squishy: Hey, I didn’t know you didn’t order it. It sounded right up your alley.

Henry: It… it was me! I thought it’d make you happy if I ruined the holiday and… told the girls not to mess with us anymore.

[Murphy doesn’t give much but a smile.]

T-Bone: You kid? Not bad for your first play.

Murphy: Don’t worry kid, they ain’t got no proof that I did it. I was nowhere near any of the root beer attacks. I always stay as far away from the holiday as possible.

Rhino: Always have an alibi, I suppose.

Henry: So… they’re not gonna throw you in time out?

Murphy: They’ll have to play some dirty tricks for that, and dolls don’t like gettin’ dirty.

[Cut to Murphy sitting at the trial desk, when the prosecutor walks up to him.]

Prosecutor: So, Mr. Murphy, where were you doing the Girls & Boys Day attacks?

Murphy: I was outta town. I ain’t never wanted nothing to do with that holiday.

[The prosecutor smiles.]

Prosecutor: Interesting. Mr. Murphy, do you know why we have laws?

Murphy: Is this a trick question?

Prosecutor: We have laws to keep things fair and orderly. And as I recall, one of the things we do to keep things fair and orderly is make sure each and every kid is honest about the presents they receive.

[Murphy’s expression fades.]

Prosecutor: After all, if a kid says that he likes someone else’s present, he might keep getting that same present year in and year out, creating some kind of anger towards family or friends.

[The prosecutor pulls up the dress Murphy got for his birthday.]

Prosecutor: According to your sister, Betty, you got this dress for your birthday, which you seemed… very appreciative of. And yet… you sit out the holiday each and every year. Tell us, Mr. Murphy… what do you really think about your sister's presents?

Murphy: Oh, you wanna know what I think about my sister and her presents?

[Jump cut to Murphy in a Time Out cell, banging against the wall, trying to get out..]

Cliff: {Off-screen} Heh heh, you really think that's goin' work?

Murphy: Why did it have to be you…

Cliff: {Off-screen} The great and almighty Murphy, most successful boy in all of Mud Flatt… reduced to sitting in a cell. What was it, one month for each present you lied about?

Murphy: If the dolls ain't gettin' to me, I ain't lettin' you get to me either.

Cliff: {Off-screen} Oh, they'll get to you one way or another. Maybe when your root beer ring falls apart. Or maybe when your hair starts tickling the back of your neck, desperate for a cut. Or maybe when makin' yer sis a pie is preferable to sittin' in here for another day.

[The door opens up and two girl scouts enter, looking at Murphy.]

Girl Scout #1: We want to talk to you.

Murphy: Yes please. Anything but standing in here.

[Murphy is brought to an interrogation room.]

Girl Scout #2: So, we want the names of everyone you were working with.

Murphy: The guy in the cell next to me, Cliff. He was my second in command.

Girl Scout #2: You think yer funny or something?

Murphy: Nah, yer the ones makin’ me laugh.

[Murphy speaks with a smile.]

Murphy: You got the big head honcho here, and you still don’t know a thing. Sounds to me like it was a boy doin’ yer work for you behind the scenes. Ain’t that the way it always is?

[The two girl scouts look at each other annoyed.]

Murphy: Do you think I care what you to do me here? After my little stunt out there I’m gonna sleep well. Ain’t no girl in this town is ever gonna mess with a boy again. My work is done here.

[Cut to sometime later. We’re once again looking at a radio.]

News announcer: And Mr. Henry Forable has just challenged Margaret for mayor!

This is something major, folks. The first time a boy has dared to do something like this in Mud Flatt.

[One of the girl scouts turns off the radio. They look to Murphy, who is on the other side of a one-way mirror. Murphy has hair that's much longer, which shows that he's been there for quite a long time.]

Girl Scout #1: It's been a year and we haven't gotten anything out of this kid. Root beer is still pouring into this city. We need to stop it.

Girl Scout #2: But how. We've been as rough as we could.

Girl Scout #1: Maybe we're taking the wrong approach. Maybe we need to get… softer.

[Cut to the two of them at an old style movie theater. Within it, they see an old timey cartoon about a Whiskers-like character. She gets mud on her dress from off-camera.]

Whiskers: Oh no no, this simply won't do!

[Cut to the audience, Girl Scout #2 is looking around.]

Girl Scout #1: Yeah, the movies talk now.

[They watch Whiskers who catches a mouse who got her dirty.]

Mouse: Oh no, Ms. Cat, please don't eat me!

Whiskers: Oh I don’t want to eat you, I just want to be your friend forever and ever.

[Cut to the Girl Scouts.]

Girl Scout #2: Okay yeah. I’ll do anything if I never had to watch something like this again.

Girl Scout #1: So… what size costume do you wear?

Girl Scout #2: Why do you ask?

[Cut to a proto 20’s-esque Whiskers costume entering Murphy’s interrogation room. Girl Scout #2 is inside the Whiskers costume.]

Murphy: What… is this?

Girl Scout #2: I… I’m your new best friend. My name is… uh Whiskers.

Murphy: Friend, huh?

Girl Scout #2: Oh yes, I’m sure we’re going to be bestest friends.

[Murphy walks up and just pulls the mask off, revealing the quivering Girl Scout inside.]

Murphy: You wanna be my friend, do something about Cliff.

[Cut to the Girl Scout #2 angrily walking into the back room, still half in the suit.]

Girl Scout #2: Well that was embarrassing. And stupid. What do we do now?

Girl Scout #1: Hmmm… maybe we should give Mr. Murphy exactly what he wants.

Girl Scout #2: You're a few marbles short of a whole set, ain't you?

[Cut to the two girl scouts holding the suit in front of Murphy.]

Murphy: So… now you want me to get in that suit. You're a few marbles short of a whole set, ain't you?

Girl Scout #1: We have a vision for Whiskers, Mr. Murphy.

Murphy: And I have a vision of coating your hair in root beer.

[Girl scout #1 laughs it off a little bit.]

Girl Scout #1: Whiskers is meant to get kids to behave by any means necessary.

Girl Scout #2: And if there's a way to get rowdy kids to behave, you've got a certain talent that can't be refused.

Murphy: And why should I help you with anything?

Girl Scout #1: Because we think Cliff really needs a friend.

[Cut to the girl scouts pushing along Cliff through the hallways.]

Cliff: Heh, you girls got a surprise for me?

Girl Scout #1: Oh yes, it’s a big one.

Cliff: Whatever you’re planning, it ain’t gonna work. I ain’t broken yet, I ain’t gonna break.

[The two girl scouts giggle as they throw Cliff into a new room.]

Cliff: Whiskers’ room?

[The throw him in and close the door behind them, locking it. It’s silent for a beat. And then from out of the darkness rises Whiskers.]

Whiskers: It looks like I’ve got a new friend.

Cliff: That voice… Murphy? What’d they do to you?

Whiskers: Murphy? My name’s Whiskers. What’s yours?

Cliff: Cliff, you know that.

Whiskers: That’s a nice name. We’re going to have so much FUN together.

[Cut to Cliff running out of the room in a panic. He cowers in front of the girl scouts.]

Cliff: I… I'll do anything! P-please. I'll be good. I'm a… good kitty. I'm a good kitty, I swears it!

[Whiskers walks outside of the room.]

Whiskers: I need more friends.

[The girl scouts look towards each other happily, with a sinister smile.]

[Cut to an alleyway. Henry is walking down the road with Murphy's boys, including Rhino, who looks incredibly shifty.]

Henry: Rhino, you look kinda nervous. Is something wrong.

Rhino: I just wanna get that root beer and get outta here. I don't wanna be caught in a set up.

Henry: Well, it looks it's a little late for that.

Rhino: What?

Henry: Hose 'em boys.

[Squishy, T-Bone, and Bugsy all spray down Rhino with root beer.]

Rhino: W-why, Henry! I helped you. You’re in charge of the root beer riders because of what I did.

Henry: Yeah, I am. And the second I turn my back, you’re gonna get cold feet about me. You’ve outlived your usefulness to me.

Rhino: Y-you can’t do this to me!

Henry: Don’t worry, when I become mayor, I’m gonna end this root beer ban, and then they might remember to let you out. You know, unless the prosecutor learns some of your little secrets. That’s how it works in this business, don’t it?

[Cut to Rhino sitting in Time Out. Time has passed. Two new girl scouts enter.]

Girl Scout #3: We sent a call to the mayor.

Rhino: So what, am I free to go? Root beer is legal; I shouldn’t be in time out for root beer, right?

Girl Scout #4: Oh yes, but mayor Henry suggest you stay here a little bit longer to learn a thing or two about friendship.

January 5, 2020

Rhino: Friendship?

[There’s a beat.]

Rhino: Oh no—

[Behind the two girl scouts, there’s Whiskers.]

Whiskers: Hello Rhino. A little birdie told me that you have some issues being trustworthy. Don’t worry though, we can fix that right up. And we can fix some other things too.

[Rhino looks up afraid.]

Whiskers: You see, Rhino, I won’t be around here forever. But there are always going to be bad kitties who need to learn friendship, and I see some potential in you. Let’s have some fun, Rhino.

Rhino: N-no, no!

[We cut back to the projector, and Whiskers walks on the screen. As Whiskers speaks, she gets more and more sinister.]

Whiskers: Wasn’t that fun!? I thought it was fun. And do you know what else I think? I think that you’re my friend. I think that you’re a special friend. A special friend who wants to make friends forever and ever. But first, we have to make you a special friend. Forever and ever. Now, now, don’t look so frightened. Whiskers knows what’s best.